

PRESS RELEASE

House Armed Services Committee Duncan Hunter, Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 8, 2003

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OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN DUNCAN HUNTER *Hearing on Iraq Reconstruction and Rehabilitation*

Just two weeks ago, we reviewed the Administration's plan for the reconstruction of Iraq with Ambassador Bremer. Today, we've asked a Defense Department official to update us on that plan as the House considers the President's request for supplemental funding. Mr. Rodman is joined by Dr. John Hamre of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

At the Department's request, Dr. Hamre and his team visited Iraq in late June and offered their thoughts on reconstruction as an outside group. Among other things, Dr. Hamre's team highlighted that the next twelve months would be critical in getting Iraq off on the right foot.

To its credit, the Department both asked for—and quickly embraced—the results of Dr. Hamre's study. Moreover, in the President's supplemental funding request, we're seeing an Administration that is working to obtain the resources needed to implement many of the report's recommendations. The Administration has thus clearly demonstrated a willingness to heed outside advice, when that advice is thoughtfully given.

I think that is the kind of advice you'll get from us. On both sides of the aisle, we're committed to supporting the troops and doing what it takes to ensure Iraq does not become a future threat to our security. Today's hearing will help us ensure that our advice is based on an accurate understanding of the facts on the ground—not on second-hand media reports.

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